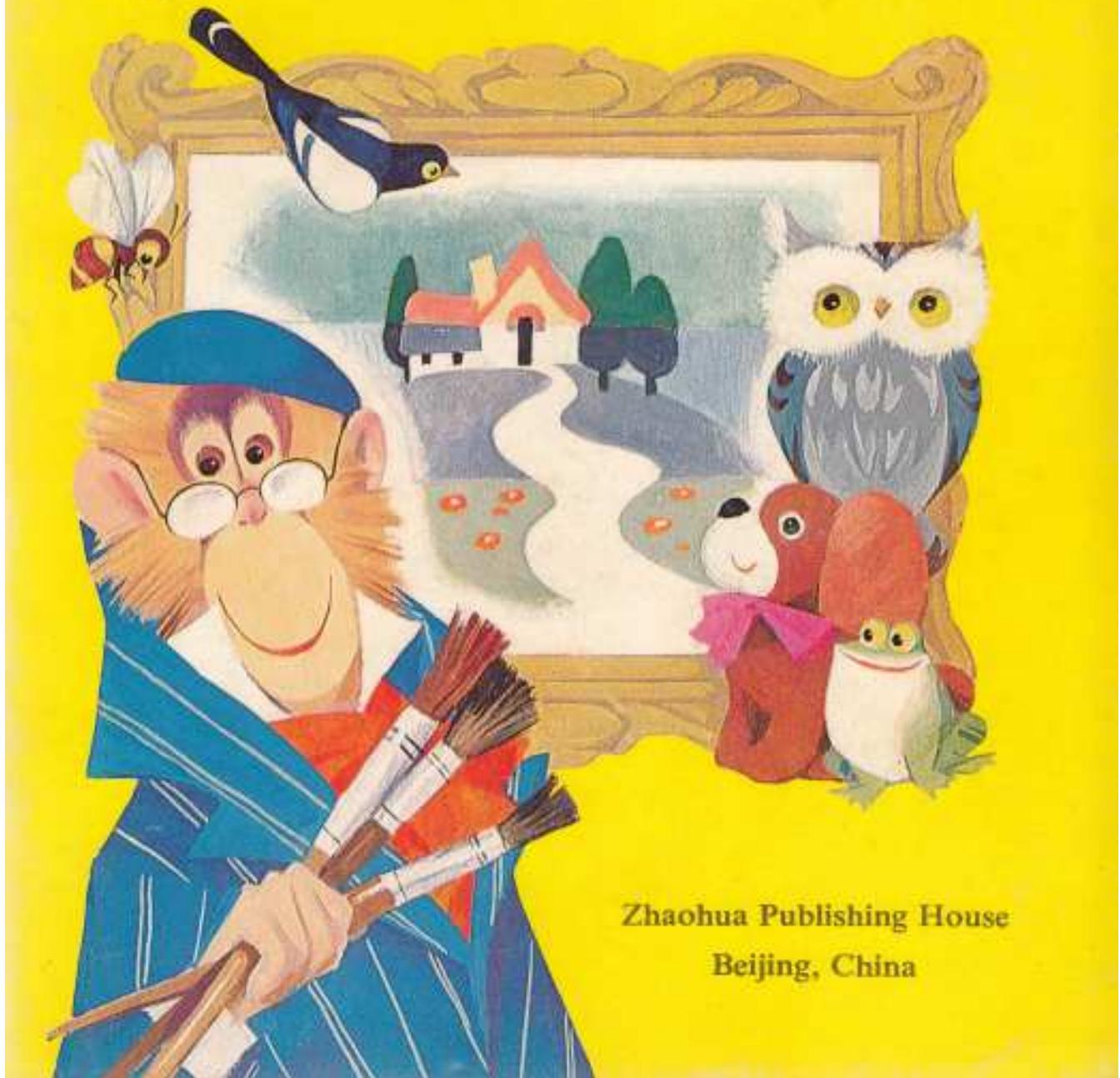




Eyes and Colours



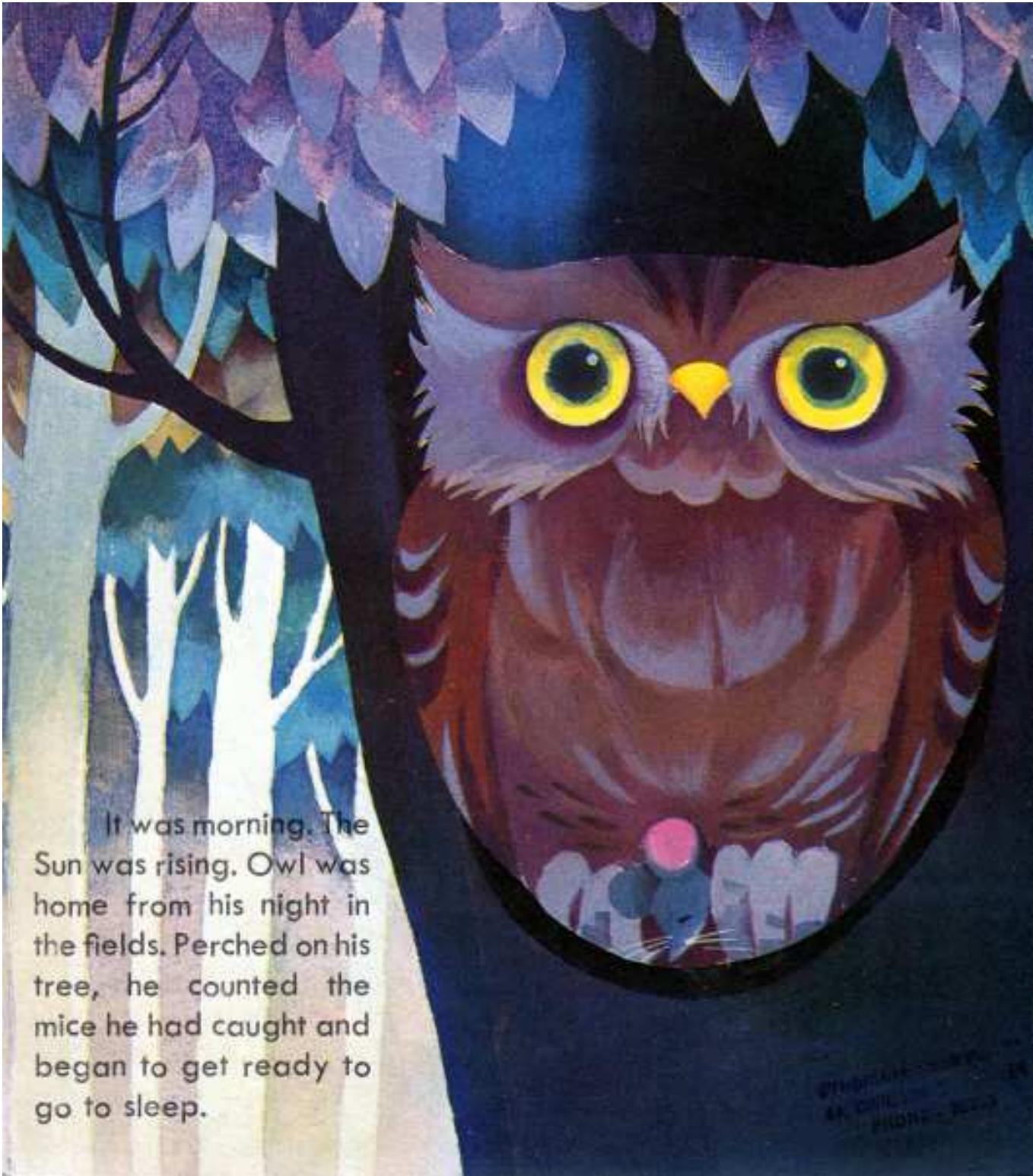
Zhaohua Publishing House
Beijing, China

First Edition 1984

Materials From the Tianjin People's Art Publishing House

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Illustrated by Wu Jinglu**

Printed in the People's Republic of China



It was morning. The Sun was rising. Owl was home from his night in the fields. Perched on his tree, he counted the mice he had caught and began to get ready to go to sleep.

Illustration by
M. C. Hodge



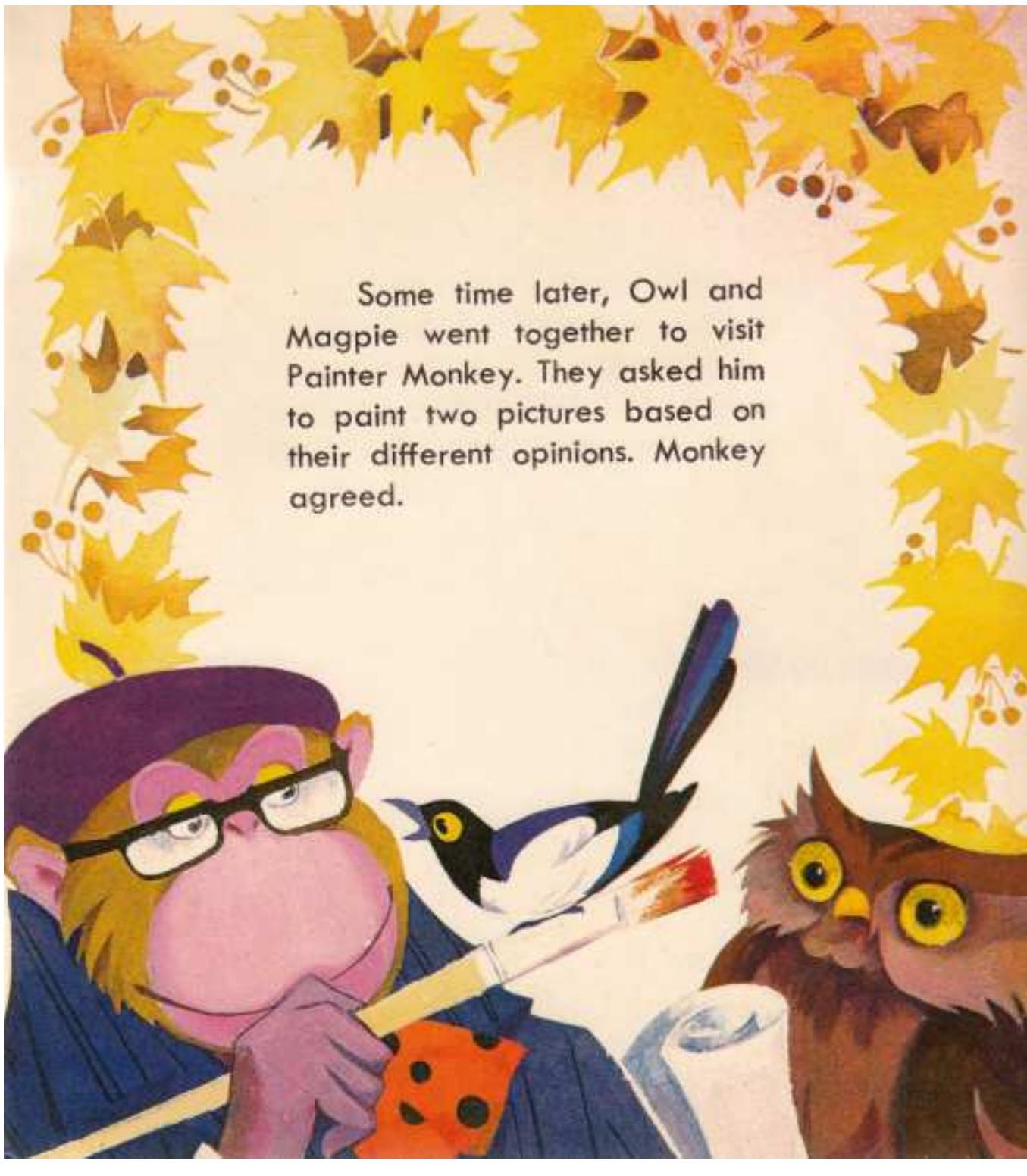
High on a branch, a magpie sang, "The colours are bright. The Sun is red. The forests are green. The waves of rice are golden...."





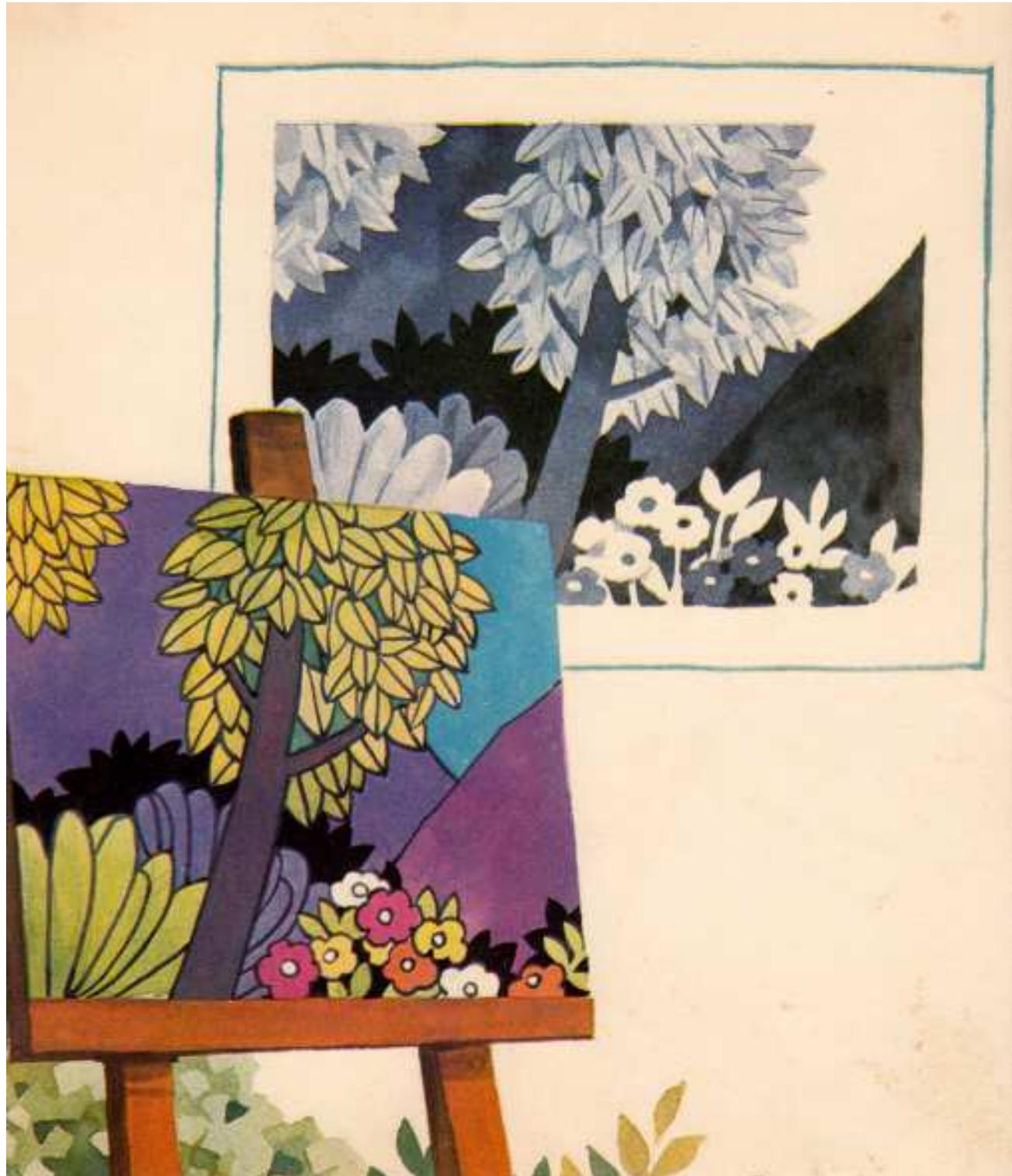


Owl thought Magpie was all wrong. He murmured to himself: "The sunlight is dim, the fields are grey. There is nothing bright around. Why does the little Magpie describe everything as colourful?"



Some time later, Owl and Magpie went together to visit Painter Monkey. They asked him to paint two pictures based on their different opinions. Monkey agreed.





Monkey painted a colourful landscape for Magpie and a traditional Chinese painting for Owl. Each was beautiful.



Two days later, Owl came for his picture. Monkey handed him the colourful landscape painting. Owl looked at it and was satisfied. He thanked the painter and left.



When Magpie came, Monkey gave her the traditional painting. Magpie chirped, "That is lovely. But it's too bad that it's not in colour."

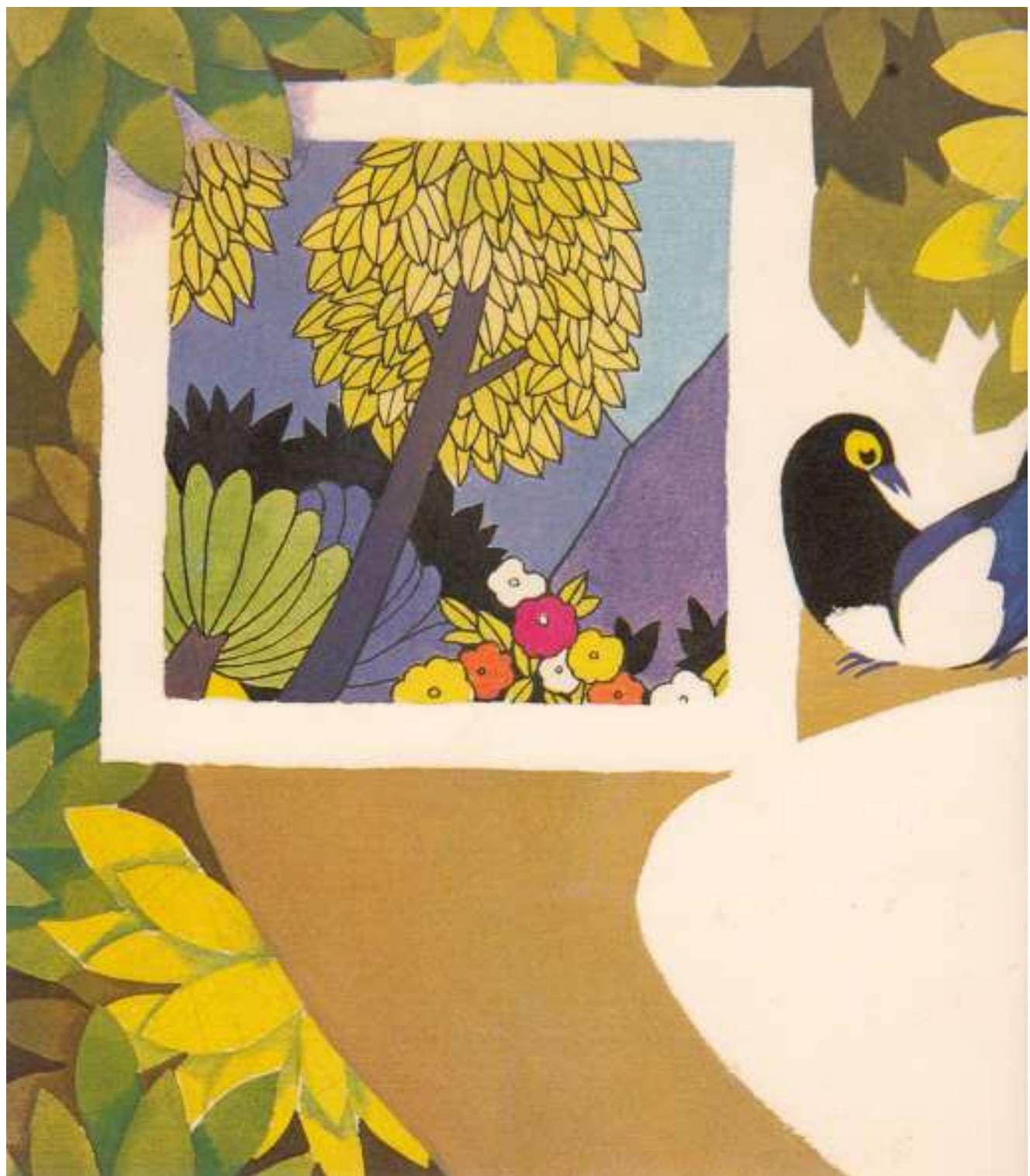




"Oh!" Monkey discovered that he made a mistake. "I have given the colourful one to Owl. Go and exchange with him," he said.

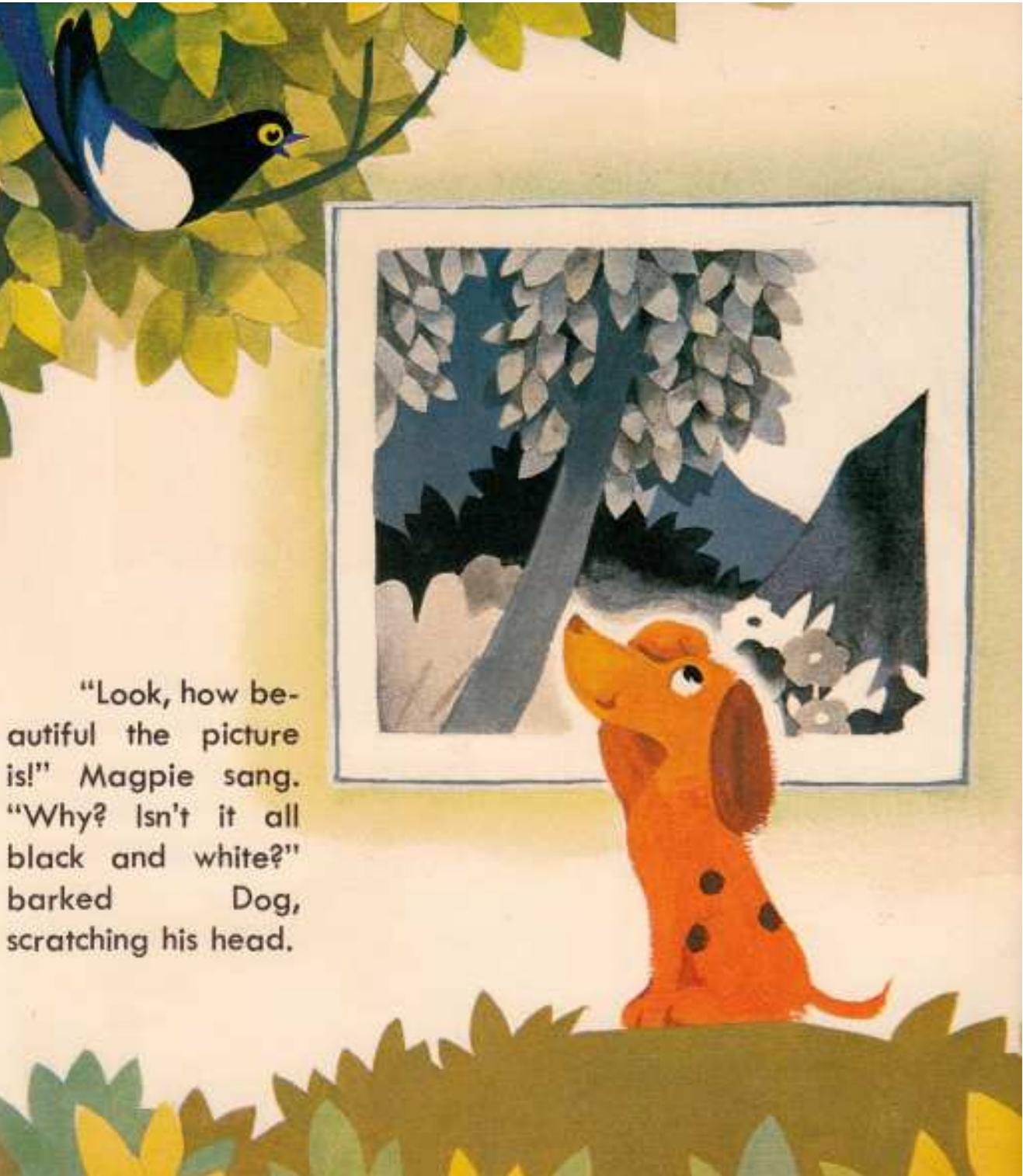


It was dusk. Magpie found Owl and asked if he would exchange pictures with her. Owl peered at the traditional Chinese painting and hooted, "Alright. Since the two are about the same, it doesn't matter." Magpie took the colourful picture gratefully.





The next day, Magpie was admiring her picture when Dog came over to see what she was doing.

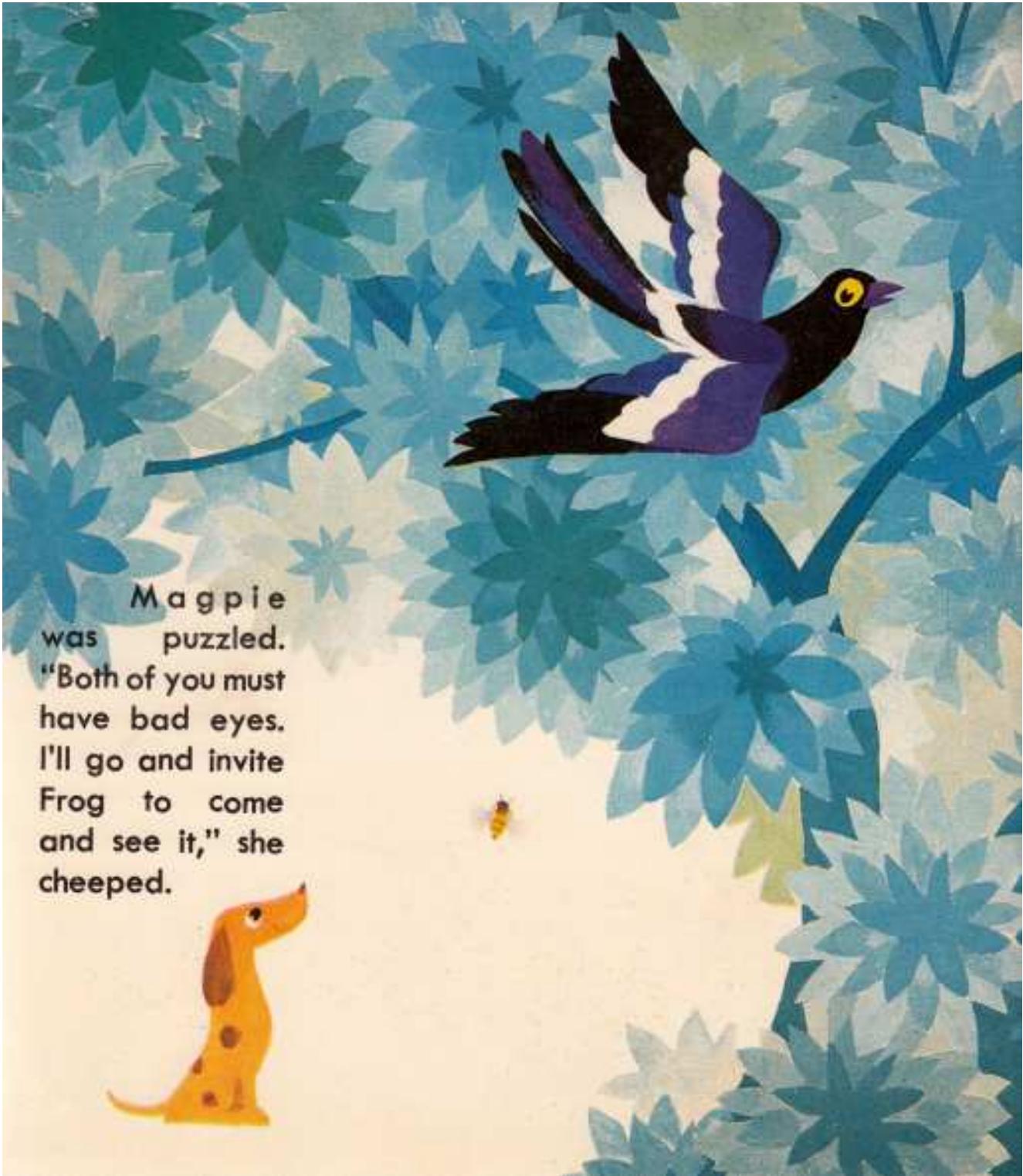


"Look, how beautiful the picture is!" Magpie sang.
"Why? Isn't it all black and white?"
barked Dog,
scratching his head.



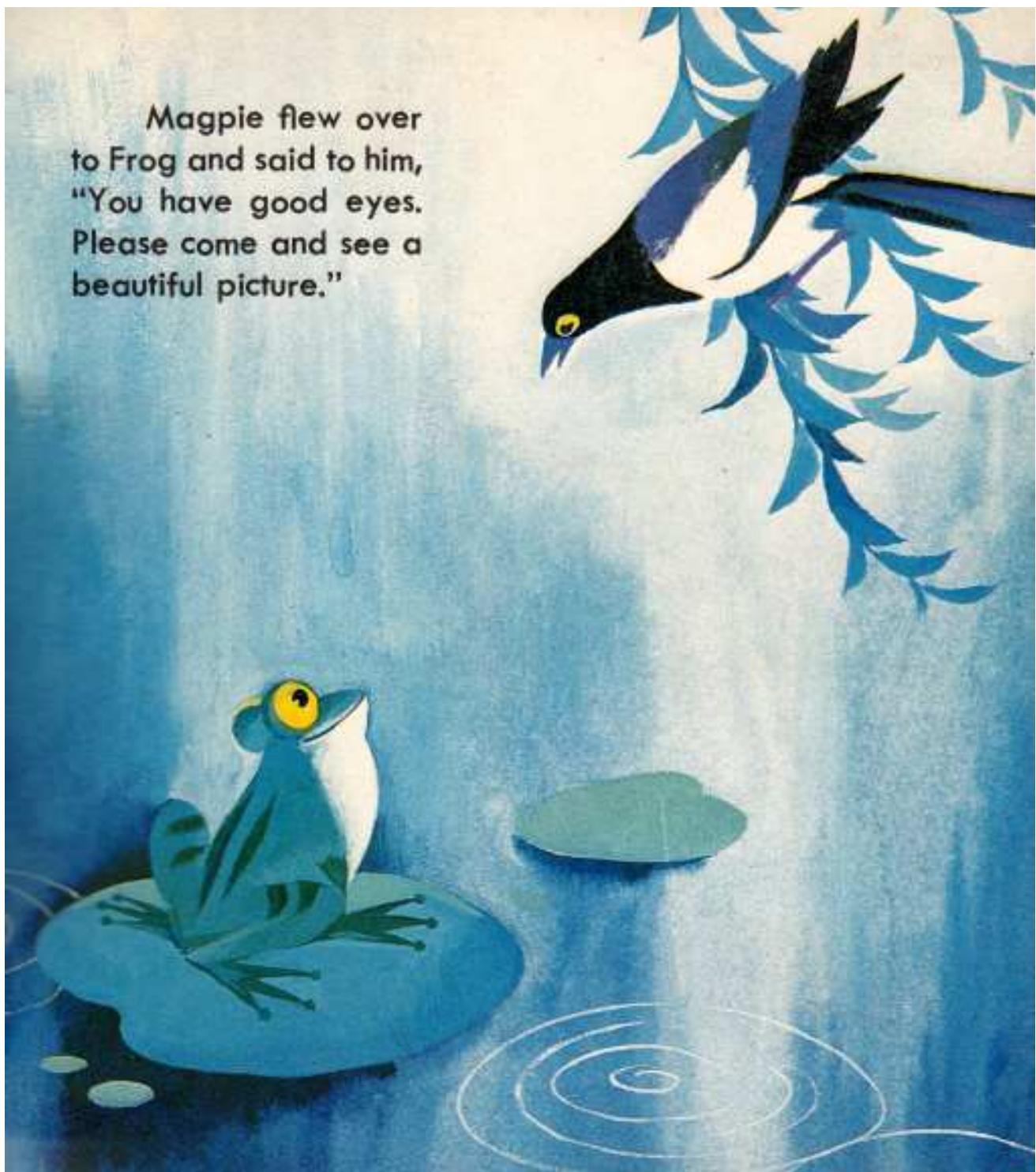
Little Bee flew up. "What are you talking about?" she buzzed. "The picture is just like what we see. The flowers are red, yellow and green."





Maggie
was puzzled.
"Both of you must
have bad eyes.
I'll go and invite
Frog to come
and see it," she
cheeped.

Magpie flew over
to Frog and said to him,
"You have good eyes.
Please come and see a
beautiful picture."

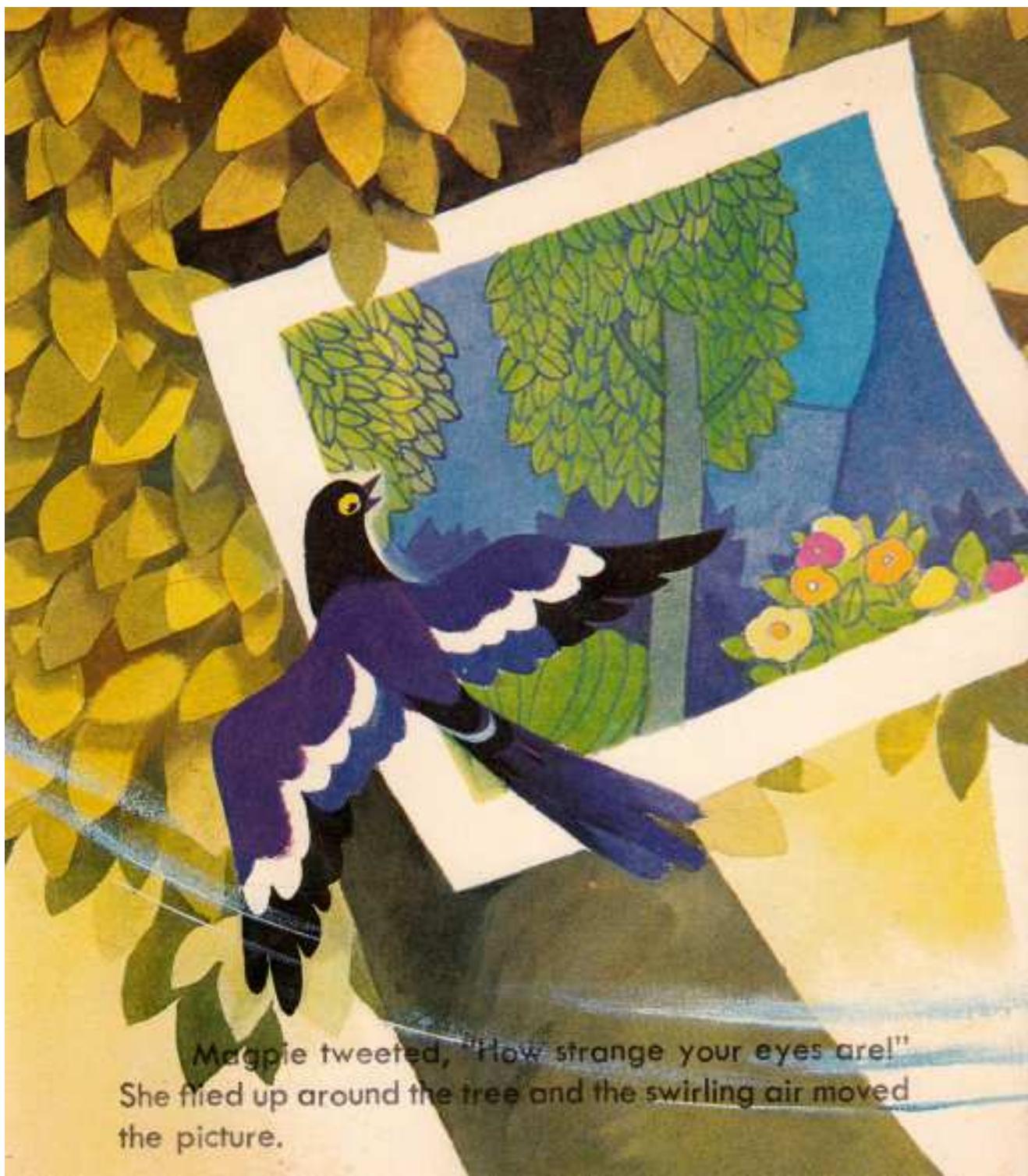




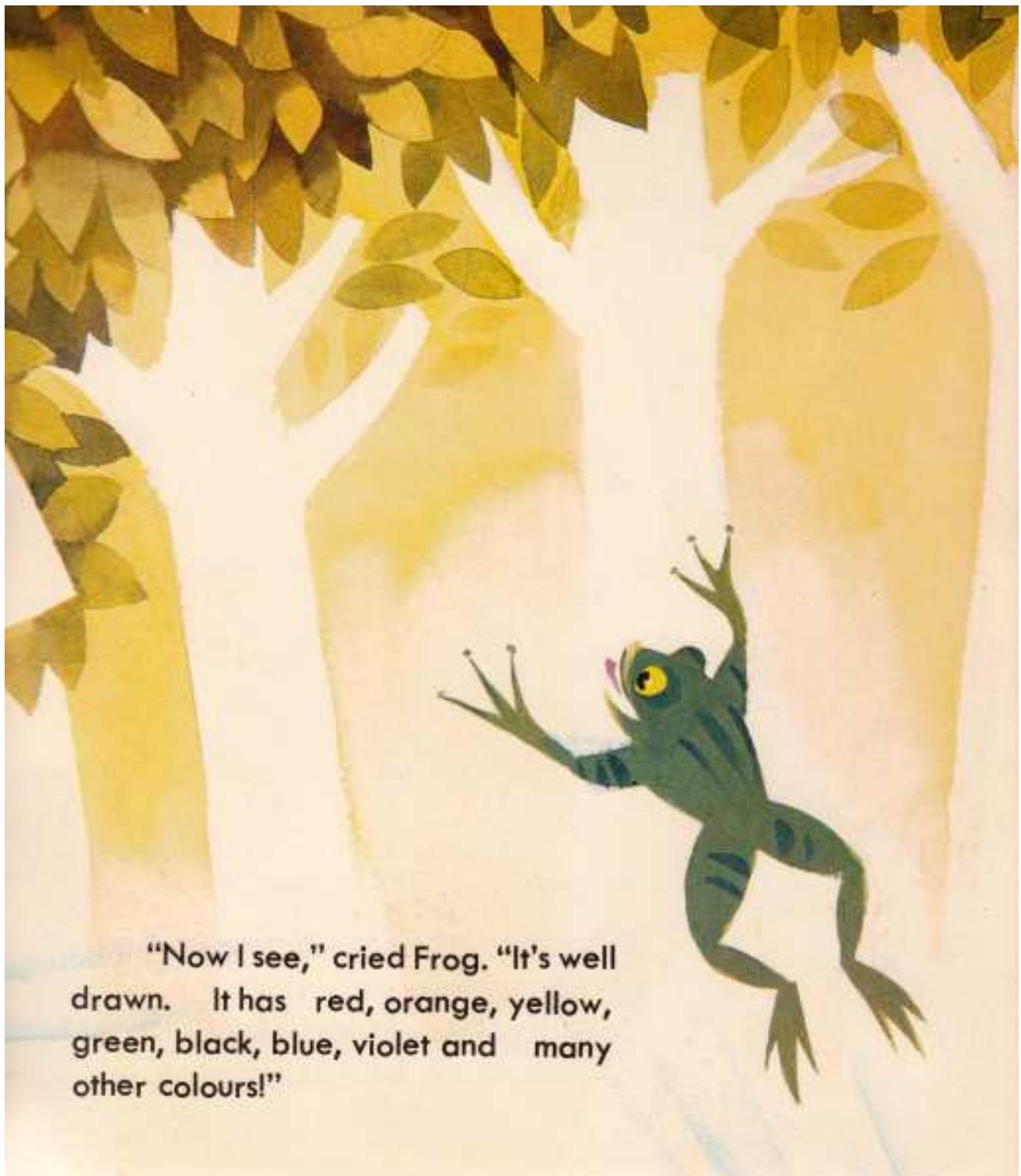
When Frog
arrived, Dog
and Little Bee
asked him, "Look
at this picture,
please."

Frog opened his eyes wide, but he can't see any picture. "Move it around, please. I cannot see anything still. But if you wiggle it, I can see it from far away," he croaked.





Maggie tweeted, "How strange your eyes are!"
She flew up around the tree and the swirling air moved
the picture.

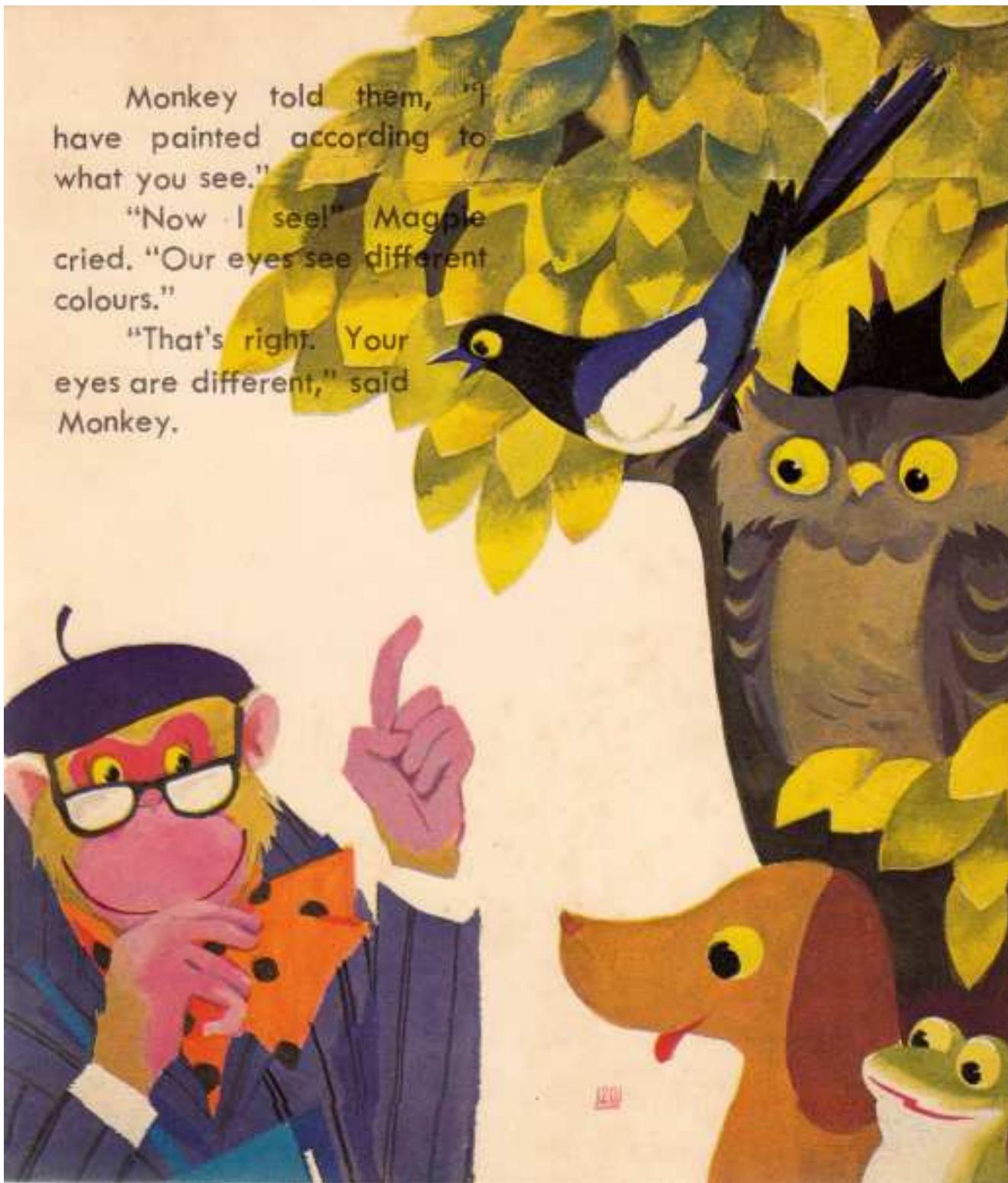


"Now I see," cried Frog. "It's well drawn. It has red, orange, yellow, green, black, blue, violet and many other colours!"



While they were talking, Monkey came along on his way to paint in the woods. He was delighted to find that they were discussing his picture. The others asked him what colours he used in the picture.





Monkey told them, "I have painted according to what you see."

"Now I see!" Magpie cried. "Our eyes see different colours."

"That's right. Your eyes are different," said Monkey.

Publisher:

Zhaohua Publishing House

(A Subsidiary of China International Book
Trading Corporation)

No. 21 Chegongzhuang Xilu

Beijing

Distributor:

China International Book

Trading Corporation

(Guoji Shudian)

No. 21 Chegongzhuang Xilu

P.O.Box 399, Beijing



眼睛与色彩

(英文版)

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出版者：朝华出版社

(中国新闻出版贸易总公司总代理处)

中国北京车公庄西路21号

印刷者：外文印务厂

中国北京车公庄西路15号

发行者：中国国际图书贸易总公司

中国北京第39号信箱

编号：ISBN 7-5007-0371-9 / O：1304年第一版

00200 (精) 00110 (平)

88-E-252

朝华出版社